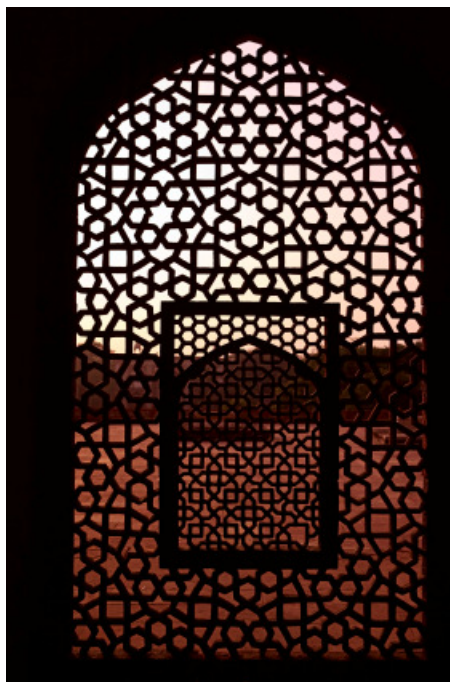


Some of the Blessings Exclusive to the Month of Fasting



Ramaḍān is a blessed month in which God the Almighty chose to reveal his greatest Book to the greatest of his creation. Hence, He determined this month to require from us an annual form of worship, fasting. The word Ramaḍān is derived from the word *al-Ramḍā'* which is a type of hot rock. It is said that this name was attributed to the month of Ramaḍān because when the Arabs convened to name the months, Ramaḍān coincided with a time of intense heat. It is also said that this name is a reflection of the fact that like hot rocks, it burns. Rather in this case, it is sins which are burned (*yarmiḍ al-dhunūb*).

God has made this month a noble one in which opportunities for worship are opened to his fasting devotees, as are the doors of Paradise. Whereas, the gates of Hellfire are shut and the devils are chained. So it is with immense eagerness that believers welcome this glorious month. It is indeed a privilege for whomever God has enabled to live to meet it and experience its bounties. The Messenger of God ﷺ used to prepare for the month of Ramaḍān and anticipate its arrival by saying at the start of Rajab, “O God, bless us in Rajab and Sha‘bān and enable us to meet Ramaḍān (*Allāhumma bārik lanā fī Rajab wa Sha‘bān wa ballighnā Ramaḍān*).”¹

He also used to prepare to meet Ramaḍān during the month of Sha‘bān through becoming abundant in his fasting and standing in prayer. He used to long for the arrival of Ramaḍān and would say upon sighting its moon, “O God, bring upon us the new moon [while we are in a state of] security and faith as well as of peace and Islam. My Lord and your Lord is Allah,”²

¹ *Majma‘ al-zawā‘id*: vol.iii, p. 140.

² *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, vol.v/ *Kitāb al-da‘wāt* 49, *Bāb* 51:h.3451.

in another transmission he added: “a crescent of virtue and guidance, a crescent of virtue and guidance, a crescent of virtue and guidance.”³

The Messenger of God ﷺ used to give his Companions the glad tidings of the arrival of the month of Ramaḍān and encourage them to be abundant in worship in it. He would say to them, “This month has dawned upon you and in it is a night superior to a thousand months. Who is deprived of it, has been deprived of the entirety of goodness. And nobody is deprived of it except the destitute (*al-maḥrūm*).”⁴ He also said, “The doors of the Heavens open on the first night of the month of Ramaḍān and they do not close until its last night.”⁵

It is related on the authority of ‘Ubāda b. al-Ṣāmit رضي الله عنه saying, “The Messenger of God ﷺ taught us [to say] these words when Ramaḍān arrived, ‘O God, deliver me soundly to the month of Ramaḍān, deliver [the blessings of] Ramaḍān to me in soundness, and deliver it to me soundly with [my efforts] accepted (*Allāhumma sallimnī li-Ramaḍān wa sallim Ramaḍāna lī wa sallimhu lī mutaqqabalan*).”⁶ In another transmission it is reported he said, “O God deliver us soundly to Ramaḍān and accept it from us while You have forgiven us, had mercy upon us, and accepted our repentance.”⁷

It is reported on the authority of Salmān b. al-Fārisī رضي الله عنه saying, “The Messenger of God ﷺ spoke to us on the last day of Sha‘bān saying: ‘O people, a great and blessed month has emerged upon you. In it there is a night that is superior to a thousand months. A month in which God has made its fast obligatory and its night vigil voluntary. Who strives to come close [to God] in it through doing a type of good [deed], it is as though he performed an obligatory act outside [of Ramaḍān]. And whoever performs an obligatory act in it, it is as though he performed seventy obligatory acts outside of [Ramaḍān]. It is the month of patience and the reward for patience is Paradise. It is a month of kindness to others and in it the provision of the believer is increased. Who breaks the fast of a believer in it, he is forgiven for his sins and he is freed from the Hellfire, and to him is a similar reward without diminishing the reward [of the fasting person] in any way. God grants this reward to one who breaks the

³ *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*: vol.5/ *Kitāb al-adab* 35, *Bāb* 111: h.5092.

⁴ *Sunan Ibn Māja*: vol.i, *Kitāb al-ṣiyām* 7/ *Bāb* 2:h.1644.

⁵ *Majma‘ al-zawā‘id*: vol.iii, p.142.

⁶ *Kanz al-‘ummāl*: vol. viii/ h.24277

⁷ *Majma‘ al-zawā‘id*: vol.iii, p. 142.

fast of another person by a bit of milk or a sip of water. And who feeds a fasting person to his fill will be granted drink from my pure spring after which one will never thirst until he enters Paradise. It is a month whose beginning is mercy (*rahma*), whose middle is forgiveness (*maghfira*), and whose end is salvation from the Hellfire (*'itq min al-nār*).”⁸

Hence, if Ramaḍān is filled with so much reward and blessing, then what could be more pressing for us than to strive in welcoming it and preparing for its arrival in a way that is worthy of its rank and the blessings it encompasses? This is not possible without a determination to restrain one’s ego (*nafs*) and train it in order to reap the benefits of this season. An awareness of the distinguishing characteristics of this month as opposed to other months will motivate us in achieving this goal. Thus the following is a list of some of the blessings unique to the month of Ramaḍān.

THE BLESSINGS EXCLUSIVE TO THE MONTH OF RAMAḌĀN

1) The Devil is Shackled, the Gates of Hell are Shut, and the Gates of Paradise are Opened

Ramaḍān is distinguished in that during this month the devil is shackled and the doors of Hell are closed shut while the doors of Heaven are opened and countless numbers of people are salvaged from Hellfire daily during each breaking of the fast. It is related on the authority of Abū Hurayra رضي الله عنه saying, “When it is the first night of Ramaḍān, the devils and the *jinn* are shackled and the doors of Hell are closed and not a single door of it is left open. While the doors of Heaven are opened and not a single one is kept shut. And a caller calls out, ‘O seeker of goodness come forward! O seeker of iniquity stay back! And God saves people from the Hellfire.”⁹ It is also reported on the authority of Jābir رضي الله عنه saying that the Prophet ﷺ said, “God saves people from the Hellfire at each breaking of the fast and the same each night,”¹⁰ meaning throughout the month Ramaḍān.

⁸ *Kanz al-‘ummāl*: vol.8/h.23714.

⁹ *Al-Mustadrak*: vol.i/p.421.

¹⁰ *Sunan Ibn Māja*: vol.i/Kitāb al-ṣiyām 7, *Bāb* 2/h.1643

2) The Multiplication of Reward for Good Deeds

From among the other blessings specific to the month of Ramaḍān is the multiplication of the reward for good actions performed during this month. It is narrated on the authority of Salmān al-Fārisī رضي الله عنه saying that the Messenger of God ﷺ said, “...Who performs any type of good, it is as though he performed an obligatory act. Who performs an obligatory act, it is as though he performed seventy obligatory acts outside of [Ramaḍān].”¹¹

3) Prayers Are Answered

Another blessing specific to this holy month is that prayers are answered in it. It is related on the authority of Abū Hurayra رضي الله عنه saying that the Messenger of God ﷺ said, “There are three whose prayers are not refused: the just ruler, the fasting person when he breaks his fast, and the prayer of the oppressed.”¹² God the Exalted also says directly following the verses on fasting, “And when My servants ask you, [O Muhammad], concerning Me - indeed I am near. I respond to the invocation of the supplicant when he calls upon Me. So let them respond to Me [by obedience] and believe in Me that they may be [rightly] guided [*al-Baqara*: 186].”

4) The Entire State of the Fasting Person is One of Worship

Another blessing specific to the fasting person is that the entire state of the fasting person is a state of fasting. Whether he refrains from excessive speech or whether he sleeps to gain strength to fast, he is in a state of worship. It is related on the authority of ‘Abd Allāh b. Abī Awfī al-Aslamī رضي الله عنه saying, “The Messenger of God ﷺ said: ‘The sleep of the one fasting is worship, his silence is remembrance (*tasbīḥ*), his [good] acts are multiplied, his sins are forgiven, and his prayers are answered.’”¹³

¹¹ *Kanz al-‘ummāl*: vol. 8/h.23714

¹² *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*: vol.4/ *Kitāb šifāt al-janna* 39, *Bāb* 2:h.2526

¹³ *Shu‘ab al-Īmān li-al-Bayhaqī* : vol.iii/ *Bāb fī al-šiyām* 23/h.3931

5) The Fasting Person is Granted Two Moments of Joy

From the distinct blessings of the month of Ramaḍān is that the fasting person is granted two moments of joy: once when he breaks his fast and once when he meets his Lord. It is related on the authority of Abū Hurayra رضي الله عنه saying, “The Messenger of God ﷺ said: ‘...The fasting person has two [sources of] joy with which he is made happy. When he breaks his fast, he is made happy with the breaking of the fast and when he meets his Lord he is made happy by his fasting.’”¹⁴

6) There is Great Reward in Breaking the Fast of the Fasting Person Without Diminishing their Reward

Another blessing that is specific to Ramaḍān is that God has reserved a great reward for the one who breaks the fast of a fasting person without decreasing the reward of the one who fasted. This is a form of honoring the person who fasted and this immense reward is established even if achieved through a simple offering such as water or a date. It is related on the authority of Salmān al-Fārisī رضي الله عنه saying, “The Messenger of God ﷺ said: ‘Who breaks the fast of the fasting person during Ramaḍān through lawful earnings, the angels will send prayers upon him for the rest of the nights of Ramaḍān. Jibrīl will greet him on the Night of Power (*Laylat al-Qadr*) and the one who is greeted by Jibrīl has the tears in his eyes increase and his heart softens. A man said, ‘O Messenger of God, what about a man who does not possess this [i.e. sufficient wealth to break the fast of others]?’ He said: ‘Then with a piece of bread.’ He said: ‘And what about one who does not have this?’ He said: ‘Then [with] a portion of food.’ He said: ‘And what about someone who does not have this?’ He said: ‘Then a bit of milk.’ He said: ‘And what about someone who does not have this?’ He said: ‘Then a sip of water.’”¹⁵

¹⁴ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*: vol.ii/ *Kitāb al-ṣiyām* 13, *Bāb* 30/h.163

¹⁵ *Kanz al-‘ummāl*: vol. viii/h. 23658

7) God has Bestowed Five Things on those Fasting from the Prophet's ﷺ Community that no Other Community has been Bestowed

From the amongst the blessings exclusively reserved for the month of Ramaḍān is what has been described in the hadith related on the authority of Jābir b. ‘Abd Allāh ﷺ saying that “The Messenger of God ﷺ said: ‘In the month of Ramaḍān, my community has been granted five [blessings] that no community before me has been given. First, during the first night of Ramaḍān God looks at them [i.e. the Muslims] and whoever God looks at will never be anguished. Second, the smell of their mouth as the day becomes later is more beautiful to God than the smell of musk. Third, the angels make repentance for them each day and night. Fourth, God commands His Paradise, “Prepare and ornament yourself for the believers. They have come close to becoming relieved of the fatigue of this world, and [moving] into My abode and bounty.” Fifth, they are forgiven in their entirety during the last night.’ A man then said, ‘Is this the Night of Power (*Laylat al-Qadr*)?’ He said: ‘No. Do you not see how it is when workers work? When they have completed their work they receive their wages.’”¹⁶

8) There is an Immense Reward for those Fasting on the Day of Judgment

From amongst the favors granted to those fasting is the immense reward they will receive on the Day of Judgment. God has reserved for them a specific door through which they will enter Paradise known as *al-Rayyān*. Nobody else will be allowed to enter through this door before or after them as a demonstration of their rank and distinction. A caller will call out, “Where are those who used to fast?” And on that Day all will desire to be from amongst this elite group. The Messenger of God ﷺ said describing this scene: “In Paradise there is a door called *al-Rayyān* through which those who used to fast will enter on the Day of Judgment. None other than them will [be allowed to] enter. It will be said: ‘Where are those who used to fast?’ They will rise

¹⁶ *Shu‘ab al-Īmān li-al-Bayhaqī* : vol.iii, *Bāb fi al-ṣiyām* 23/2603.

and nobody other than them will enter. Once they have entered the door will shut and nobody else will be allowed to enter from it.”¹⁷

¹⁷ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*: vol.ii/*Kitāb al-ṣawm* 36, *Bāb* 4/h.1797.